DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 231 692 SO 014 709

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TITLE An Assessment of Organized Youth Mobility in Europe. AFS Occasional Papers in Intercultural Learning, No. 3.
INSTITUTION AFS International/Intercultural Programs, Inc., New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE Mar 83
NOTE 22p.
AVAILABLE FROM AFS International/Intercultural Programs, Inc., 313 East 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017 (free).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; *Educational Objectives; Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; Exceptional Persons; Foreign Countries; *International Educational Exchange; International Organizations; Minority Groups; Participant Characteristics; Program Descriptions; Research Needs; *Student Exchange Programs; Student Mobility; Study Abroad
IDENTIFIERS *Europe; *Host Nation Programs

ABSTRACT

An overview of youth exchange programs in Europe is provided from a previous study of 15 exchange programs in Member States of the European Community plus Spain and Portugal. The 15 programs can be categorized as short-term, broadly based exchanges; long-term, selective exchanges; short-term exchanges organized by educational organizations or as part of more complex research; extracurricular travel to learn languages; and exchanges for special groups, e.g., handicapped. Support for cultural exchanges in the public sector comes mostly from international organizations rather than national governments. The most commonly declared goal of organizers of exchanges is international understanding. Specific goals include environmental education, technical education, and improvement of a foreign language. In addition to those students financially able to participate, scholarship plans exist for young working people, handicapped, and minority groups. All organizations are finding it increasingly important to have selection criteria and to obtain accurate descriptions of applicants. However, very few institutions prepare participants for their experience in accordance with the techniques of cross-cultural training. Only three of the institutions are equipped to deal with crises due to separation from home. Unfortunately, program evaluations and research efforts are few. (KC)

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NO. 3

Occasional Papers in Intercultural Learning

MARCH 1983

ED231692

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An Assessment of Organized Youth Mobility in Europe

by: Roberto Ruffino

SP 014 709

A Publication of AFS International/Intercultural Programs, Inc.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF AFS INTERNATIONAL

AFS volunteers and professional staff throughout the world are moving towards the goal of peace by stimulating an awareness of mankind's common humanity, a wider understanding of the diverse cultures of the world, and a concern for the global issues confronting society. They acknowledge that peace is a dynamic concept threatened by injustices both between and within nations.

In pursuit of this goal, the core of the AFS experience has been the promotion of relationships in which families, communities, groups and maturing young persons from different cultural backgrounds share new learning situations related to the purposes of AFS. In addition, through experience and experimentation, AFS has developed and continues to encourage new models and opportunities for exchange that will be beneficial for the development of society.

AFS does not affiliate with any religious, political or partisan group, but it believes in the value of participating in a continuous process of interaction between cultures both across and within boundaries.

AFS encourages all participants to involve themselves in situations in which they can apply and project their AFS experience.

DR. URS-RAINER VON ARX

AN APPRECIATION

When you receive the fourth number of the *Occasional Papers in Intercultural Learning*, "Urs-Rainer von Arx" will not appear on the masthead. Urs has just returned to his native Switzerland to take up a new challenge in the world of business.

We think that a page in the *Occasional Papers* is an appropriate place to note with regret Urs's departure from full-time professional involvement with AFS International. *OPIL* was Urs's idea. And not only did he conceive of *OPIL* and give it it's name, but he also took an active interest in the development of each of the three numbers we've published so far. The *Papers* are proving to be one of the most successful undertakings of the AFS Research Department, and both of us are deeply grateful to Urs for leading the way.

Fortunately, Urs has agreed to write an article for publication in *OPIL* setting forth some of what he has learned about the international exchange of students and other sojourners during his years as an exchange student, as an adult volunteer, and finally as the Vice President for Programs. And we are happy to report that Urs will serve in a volunteer capacity as the eyes and ears of the Research Department in Europe, and that he will continue to work in other ways to help AFS International achieve a pre-eminent position throughout the world in the growing field of intercultural learning.

Urs-Rainer von Arx, we salute you!

Neal Grove

Bettina Hansel

AN ASSESSMENT OF ORGANIZED YOUTH MOBILITY IN EUROPE

Roberto Ruffino
Secretary-General
Intercultura
Rome, Italy

Editors' Introduction: The following article is excerpted from the "Concluding Comments" of Fifteen Studies of Youth Mobility *(1982), the final report of a survey of fifteen European youth exchange programs, carried out by Intercultura for the European Economic Community. The purpose of this survey was to provide a wide representative sample and overview of the types of programs and activities for "youth mobility" that are currently available in Europe. Most of the 214-page report is devoted to detailed, individual descriptions of each of the exchange programs surveyed. The fifteen programs surveyed were the following:*

1. *Exchanges between Dutch and British technical colleges under the auspices of the (British) Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges.*

2. *Exchanges between lycees in Mannheim and Toulon under the auspices of the Franco-German Youth Office.*

3. *Exchanges with other European nations promoted by the English county of Leicestershire.*

4. *Exchanges between schools in Llanelli (Wales) and Huy (Belgium).*

5. *Exchanges between schools under the auspices of the UNESCO Associated Schools system.*

6. *Exchanges between schools promoted by the European Community's "Environmental Education School Network."*

7. *Exchanges involving all EEC member states plus Spain, Portugal, and other areas of the world arranged by the European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL).*

8. *Teaching French and German to, and providing exchanges for, slow learners in the English county of Hertfordshire.*

9. *Exchange visits arranged by "twinned towns" such as Birmingham (England) and Frankfort (Germany).*

10. *Visits to Ireland by Spanish youth for the purpose of English language learning, under the auspices of several Spanish organizations.*

11. *Travel for handicapped people arranged by Mobility International.*

12. *Outdoor activities arranged by Outward Bound.*

13. *Programs for children organized by Children's International Summer Villages.*

14. *Visits of young people to Greece in 1978 and to Italy in 1980 under the patronage of the Council of Europe.*

15. *Study for the International Baccalaureate degree at the United World College located in Llantwit Major, South Glamorgan, Wales.*

The editors of the Occasional Papers *are making this information available because the report prepared by Roberto Ruffino takes a broad view of exchange schemes in Europe, and because it discusses many of the issues related to intercultural learning programs that are of concern to AFS International and to the field of intercultural exchange at large.*

Intercultura is an Italian organization dedicated to the promotion of intercultural learning. Based in Rome with an office staffed by ten professionals, it has its research and conference center in San Gimignano, Tuscany, and voluntary chapters in fifty-five Italian cities and towns. Intercultura has more than 2000 volunteers, many of whom are former program participants or educators interested in intercultural learning. In addition to being the arm of AFS International in Italy, Intercultura operates programs in cooperation with the Italian Ministries of Education and of Foreign Affairs. Besides its affiliation with AFS International, Intercultura has an international affiliation with the European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL) and has implemented programs, activities, and research for UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and the European Economic Community.

Roberto Ruffino is Secretary-General of Intercultura. In addition, he is a Trustee of AFS International, a board member of the European Federation for Intercultural Learning, and a member of the governing council of the Society for Intercultural Education, Training, and Research (SIETAR).

The full report on which this article is based will be published during 1983 by the EEC in all the languages of its member states. For further details, contact Intercultura, Via dell Elettronica 18, 00144 Rome, Italy.

INTRODUCTION

This article is based on a study of fifteen examples of organized youth mobility in Member States of the European Community plus Spain and Portugal. The examples described are only a few of the very many instances of youth exchange in Europe, but they were selected because they are significant in various ways and because they cover the whole EEC area. Care was also taken to cover the range of visits in terms of their duration, from one week to two years. The study we undertook focused on the participants in the exchange, in other words, on the young people involved. This was possible only when the material available was comprehensive and reliable. The examples cited affect all the European Community countries to varying degrees. Many major exchange schemes have been omitted because they took place in countries already well represented in this report; on the other hand, what may be minor examples have been chosen because they were based in countries normally not included in the mainstream of youth exchange projects. In other words, it should be stressed right from the start that these are not necessarily the fifteen most important cases of youth mobility to be found in the European Community today; they are fifteen case histories which complement each other and constitute a varied set of approaches. They are organized by educational and non-educational institutions; they vary in length; their aims and content differ; and they cover different geographical areas. Our purpose is to give as wide and varied an overview as possible of what exists in this field.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FIFTEEN YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

Exchange Typology

The fifteen cases of youth mobility we explored fall into the following categories: short-term, broadly based exchanges; long-term, selective exchanges; short-term exchanges organized by educational organizations; short-term exchanges as part of more complex research; extracurricular travel to learn languages; and exchanges for special groups, for example, the handicapped. We found two basic types of programme in terms of the age groups they serve: programmes for children and adolescents in the 10 to 15 age bracket and programmes for young people between 15 and 19. Mobility International states no specific age group for its participants since the common factor is the desire to integrate the handicapped with the nonhandicapped in various international activities, regardless of age.

On the subject of the age of participants, it is of interest that many organizations have two basic motivations for focusing on younger or on more mature adolescents. There is one group of exchange visit organizers that stresses the importance of providing children with the

opportunity for international experience at an age at which they can still come into emotional contact with a "foreigner" without diffidence and without tempering the contact by an over-rational approach. This is the case of the Children's International Summer Villages, which were explicitly created to influence the future behavior of youngsters by giving them international experience at a very early age. A similar concept is also expressed by the Leicestershire education authority, which quotes Burstall: "feelings of empathy towards people of other countries start to decline at about the age of 12."[1] Other institutions, such as United World College and EFIL, appear to prefer the youngsters to be more mature and to have acquired an awareness of their own national background so that they can be exposed to international experiences without fear of being denationalized.

Leaving aside the debate as to whether it is better to expose children to an international experience at an age when they are not yet suspicious of foreigners, or at an age when they have already acquired an awareness of their culture, there is the practical and serious problem of the organizers' responsibilities and the ability of young people to manage their own affairs. This is why many organizations prefer not to cater for children under the age of 14. The person in charge of exchanges in the city of Frankfort discusses this subject specifically, stating that 14 is the age at which "a minimal level of psychological equilibrium can be expected," and therefore the age at which a child is able to take part in an exchange without creating excessive problems for himself and others.

Although other institutions are not quite so explicit, it is obvious that these two considerations -- the ideological view on the age group most likely to be receptive to an international experience and the "common sense" view as to the age at which young people can cope for themselves during a stay abroad -- are borne clearly in mind by all the organizers and to a great extent determine the type of programme and the ages of the children for whom the programme is designed.

Geographical Distribution and Involvement of Peripheral Regions

It will surprise nobody that most exchanges in the European Community take place in France, West Germany, and the United Kingdom, both because they have longer-standing facilities for promoting such ventures and because of the predominant role played by the languages of those countries on the international scene. On the other hand, international institutions have always argued that it is important to involve what are known as "peripheral" regions. The concept is embodied in Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation

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[1] Burstall. *Final Report on the primary/secondary French experiment. Editor's Note: The quote was taken from a secondary source. No further information was provided in the citation there, and our efforts to obtain additional information for the citation here were without success.*

897/1980, which calls on governments "to foster educational visits and school exchanges through support measures, especially financial, and to increase their range in order to include states whose languages are not widespread. . . ." It is obvious that financial restraints and the international situation, in which the French, English, and German languages have assumed a predominant role in Europe, do not promote the involvement of peripheral regions. Any programme designed to involve the regions in question and any special effort along these lines are, therefore, of particular interest. Several of the organizations surveyed sponsored programmes in these regions.

Typology of Promoters

Most of the programmes described in this article are promoted by public bodies of an international, national, or regional nature. From the case material examined in our survey, it would appear that most support for cultural exchanges in the public sector comes from international organizations (UNESCO, Council of Europe, and the EEC) and local authorities (the county authorities in England, the "Auslandsamt" in the German "Länder," councillors for culture in the Italian regions, and education authorities in most European cities) rather than from national governments. The only happy exceptions seem to be the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges in the United Kingdom, and the Franco-German Youth Office.

In view of the lack of national structures even to back the programme by furnishing information, let alone giving more active support, the international voluntary organizations play a vital role in making up for their governments and by their experimentation, both in the general sector of youth exchanges (as in the case of the European Federation for Intercultural Learning) and in the specialist sectors: exchanges for the handicapped (Mobility International) and younger children (Children's International Summer Villages) or outdoor and character-building activities (Outward Bound).

Even in what might be seen as the public sector, however, voluntary work is very important in backing up the institutionalized structures. There are, for instance, voluntary groups of teachers and pupils who carry out the UNESCO Associated Schools programmes, with highly flexible remote coordination through a network of national commissions appointed to supervise the programme. There are also voluntary groups in some of the towns twinned with Birmingham and Frankfort (Lyon and Dublin, for example) seeking families who will provide hospitality and helping the foreign students during their three-week stay.

In broader terms, however, the group of voluntary workers can be said to include the teachers and civil servants who pioneer the idea of youth mobility within their own establishments and make the arrangements themselves, often at the cost of a great deal of time and energy,

for which they receive no extra pay from their employers. This is perhaps an inevitable aspect of the youth mobility sector deserving a fairer measure of recognition.

The Aims of the Programmes

International understanding is the most commonly declared aim of the organizers of the exchanges discussed here. UNESCO Associated Schools and the towns twinned with Frankfort refer specifically to the Recommendation on Education for Understanding, Cooperation, and World Peace and on Education in Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties, approved by the 18th general conference of UNESCO on 19 November 1974.

Children's International Summer Villages refers to an internationalistic educational philosophy, stressing the value of involving children emotionally at an age in which they have no suspicion of foreigners. The organizers of exchanges in the county of Leicestershire also quote these theories. International understanding is the reason why the United World College was set up, as implied in its name. The principle underlying UNESCO -- "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences for peace must be built" -- seems to be the common denominator of all these programmes.

More openly European, on the other hand, is the motivation for exchanges such as those arranged by the Llanelli schools and the county of Leicestershire as well as the ambitious summer visits to Greece and Italy implemented by the governments of those two countries.

Some institutions state that cross-cultural education is the main aim of their programmes. The leader in this field is EFIL, whose name (European Federation for Intercultural Learning) embodies this intent. It is also the purpose of the programme involving schoolchildren in Mannheim and Toulon, some of the exchanges organized by Leicestershire, and the programme introduced by the Institut Technique de l'Etat, Huy. This purpose may be expressed in different words but it can be summarized by the ideal of "self-knowledge through others," the basis for such learning. EFIL expresses the concept most comprehensively in speaking of

> "a new learning situation, where learners of different cultural backgrounds are helped to see their differences as resources to draw from and to gain a greater awareness of self, rather than as deviations from established norms; or where each culture is explained in the context of others through a process that stimulates doubts about oneself, curiosity for others, and understanding of the interactions between both. Such a process should involve the

learners intellectually as well as emotionally."[2]

Close to this approach, but more emotional, is the one adopted by Mobility International, which speaks of "friendship" as being the aim of its programmes.

There are also special programmes with specific ends such as:

- environmental education in the case of the schools belonging to the European Community's "Environmental Education School Network";
- technical education, embodied in the planning of a specific project in the Netherlands and England;
- improvement of a foreign language, especially in the case of the Spanish programmes, the schemes arranged by the twinned towns, schools in Huy and Llanelli, and the county of Leicestershire.

The conclusions that might be drawn from the cases we have considered are that educational establishments and public bodies at the local level (in other words, those in more direct contact with the realities of school life) are more directly concerned with the practical aspects of the exchanges and the immediate linguistic benefits, whereas international institutions and voluntary agencies are more interested in idealistic aims, reflecting their institutional principles and harmonizing with the ideals motivating voluntary workers to give their services.

Typology of Participants

Students and schoolchildren have always been the main category of participants in youth mobility programmes. Our research does not belie this belief in any way: indeed, all of the fifteen organizations discussed include them among their beneficiaries. What should be stressed, rather, are the cases in which scholarship or other charitable schemes make it possible to bring in young people whose family resources would otherwise make it impossible for them to participate. This is the case of the United World Colleges and EFIL. Help is also offered by the Franco-German Youth Office and by certain local governments in association with part of their programmes.

Young working people are involved in some of the fifteen programmes. First of all there is the exchange of young workers within

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[2]"Annual Report 1981-1982." *EFIL Newsletter 3/1982*. European Federation for Intercultural Learning (Antwerp, Belgium), 1982. p. 3.

the European Community by EFIL, this being one of the institutions that have signed an agreement with EEC and have been appointed to implement the programme. Leicestershire sponsors travel to France by apprentices as part of their training. In a sense, too, the exchange in the technical sector between the technical colleges of Hengelo in the Netherlands and Canterbury in England are directed towards future young workers. When discussing this group, mention must be made of the young unemployed, whose numbers are growing fast in Europe. It is a matter of regret that there are no programmes designed specifically for this group, even though the European Community directive does not exclude unemployed young people from the exchanges of young workers.

The handicapped make up another category of young people to whom more and more attention is being paid in the field of exchanges. Not only is there an international organization specifically working for this aim (Mobility International), but there are many more organizations, including some of those discussed in the report, that are making systematic plans to include handicapped youngsters among the participants in their schemes.

Minority groups, finally, are explicitly mentioned by EFIL, which has arranged international seminars in Lapland, Catalonia, and the Alpine valleys of Camonica and Sole, with the aim of making young people more aware of the position of minorities in European countries.

Selection of Participants

The organizers of short-term programmes usually do not concern themselves with methods of selection, nor of course do those who arrange the exchange of school classes under which a given school group takes part in the scheme. The question of selection is not covered by the organizers of programmes for which a charge is made and which are open to anyone who can afford them. In the case of the Children's International Summer Villages, specific mention is made of drawing names by lot to prevent favouritism on behalf of their own children by the organizers, a method of deciding who should have the few places available when these are outnumbered by applications.

Selection is particularly stringent in the case of organizations promoting long-term visits by offering scholarships, which receive far more applications than the places available. This is the case of the United World College and the year-long visits abroad sponsored by EFIL. Here special stress is placed on the applicants' intellectual curiosity, academic abilities, and emotional stability, factors that are investigated by ad hoc committees through interviews and other methods.

It is interesting to find, however, that even those organizations promoting short-term visits are finding it increasingly important to make some kind of selection and obtain accurate descriptions of the participants -- especially when the youngsters are to live in families

in the other country and need to be carefully matched. The city of Frankfort specifically mentions that it makes out cards on students and host families as a prerequisite for the smooth running of programmes. It appears that the schools in Llanelli and Huy are also moving towards a similar arrangement as it helps to ensure the success of the scheme and is more rewarding for the family and the pupil who have to live together, if only for a week.

Preparation for the Experience in Another Country

Nobody seems to question the fact that careful preparation for living in another country will increase the chances of a programme's success. On looking more closely at the fifteen cases discussed in this article, however, we find that no preparation in fact takes place in many instances and much is left to the good will and resources of the participants.

The most glaring examples of lack of preparation were the summer visits to Greece and Italy, where, partly because of the very short time available, the participants arrived without even being fully briefed on the programme awaiting them. This is the complaint most frequently made in the assessments by the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges. In other cases, too, there was no explicit mention of a programme of preparation for life in another country.

The preparations for visits arranged by education authorities usually take the form of an introduction to the country's history, geography, and literature as part of the curriculum studied before departure. In other cases, preparation for the experience is inherent in the subject being studied at school, as with the environmental protection projects in schools associated with this European system or the British and Dutch technical colleges working on a joint project. It is these institutions that highlight the value of different cultural approaches and then arrive at a common solution.

Nevertheless there seem to be very few institutions preparing young participants in accordance with the latest techniques of cross-cultural training. Although still on a small scale, something is being done in Frankfort: "at a briefing which always makes its mark, everyone is told that success or failure depends solely on their specific ability to overcome the barriers of national cultures and to accept their partner as a person who may be different but who is of equal value."

Through a series of seminars on the subject of preparation for living in another culture, EFIL has produced a set of documents, exercises, and meetings designed to make participants aware of intercultural communication. Of all the organizations covered by our research, EFIL is the only one to concern itself in detail with this important

aspect of experience in another country. It should be noted, however, that the science of interculturalism is a recent arrival in Europe; up to this time, most progress in this field had been in North America.

Educational Content

Observation and study of the situation in one's own country and the country to be visited seem to be the common denominators of most of the youth mobility programmes described in our report. In some cases, that observation is more circumscribed and directed towards the specific school environment. The programme of the Institut Technique de l'Etat, Huy, for example, speaks of a "comparison of school systems, teaching systems, classroom life and education in general." The person in charge of exchange visits in the city of Frankfort declares that the subject of youngsters' observations during their stay in another country is "the whole situation around them, not filtered through their teachers' eyes." The educational content of programmes lies in the confrontation with a new situation, the incentive to look back at and question what has been left at home and to reflect about the differences between the other country and one's own.

Some of the programmes we examined, on the other hand, have more specific contents. For example,

- learning a foreign language by talking directly to people in the host country, referring back to the rudiments acquired at school, stimulating further interest in the country's life and language on returning to the home country;
- education in development through cooperation, as explicitly stated in the UNESCO Associated Schools project;
- a project of a technical kind, as in the case of the Dutch and British technical colleges;
- the International Baccalaureate curriculum, as in the case of the United World College.

Methodology

In the light of the projects considered here, there appear to be six fundamental methodological approaches to achieving programme objectives:

Faith in the virtues of living in an international community: some institutions do not seem to be greatly concerned with the dynamic process of communication among people of different cultures but believe it is sufficient for young people from different parts of the world to live together to create an atmosphere

that is emotionally propitious to learning and reconsideration of their prejudices;

Joint classroom work: this is the most common strategy for the exchange of school classes and the category that includes exchanges between Huy and Llanelli and between Mannheim and Toulon, as well as some of the exchanges arranged by Leicestershire;

Work on a joint project: the focus of interest is shifted to the project itself, the intellectual/academic aspects of the contact receiving more emphasis than human/emotional factors, as in the case of the exchange between technical colleges in Holland and England (at least in the initial stages) and the Environmental Education School Network;

The family as the microcosm of a society: Frankfort is the leader in stressing the value of intuitive and unstructured learning, based on three weeks spent with a foreign family which, in transmitting its views and values to its own children, acts in a similar role with its "adopted" child;

Combination of family and school or family and work: this is the approach adopted by EFIL, on the assumption that a family's contribution is not sufficient but should be supplemented by what can be learned from other components of society as well as its own programmes of guidance and introduction to the host society;

Exchange of materials: this is a strategy used during the phase of preparing for an exchange or, on a more permanent footing, by the UNESCO Associated Schools and the schools linked with the Environmental Education School Network.

Aid for Participants

From looking at the individual organizations, we realised that there are two basic types of assistance for participants: "disciplinary" and "psychological." The former obviously varies depending on the age of those taking part. It is to be found in all the organizations discussed in this report. In most cases the guidance is given by teachers, but in others, such as Children's International Summer Villages, it is the members of the organization itself who have lived through an experience abroad a few years earlier who act as guides. A special case is the assistance provided by nonhandicapped people to the handicapped members of a group depending on their needs.

Another problem is the "psychological" form of aid. One might well wonder how many organizations are equipped to tackle the identity crises and homesickness that inevitably arise while living in an alien culture. It should be pointed out that most of the organizations try to avoid the problem by arranging visits of a limited duration which

do not lead to a radical crisis of values or depression due to over-long separation from home. Only in three of all the cases considered is reference made to situations of this kind: in the exchanges between twinned towns, Birmingham is reported as being equipped to deal with "difficult cases and emergencies." The United World College has introduced a system of housemasters and tutors, the former acting in the role of parents in each of the houses into which the student body is divided, the latter keeping in close touch with a small group of students assigned to them. Finally, EFIL has a system of advisors, one for each foreign student, whose task is to maintain close contact with the student, his family, and his host school.

It obviously would be impossible to expound a theory on the process of adapting to foreign cultures in the space of a few lines, but it might be suggested that programmes not implying or foreseeing the possibility of a crisis in the participants' values differ both in quality and in substance from those in which such a possibility is taken into account, with facilities set up to cope with a crisis if it arises.

Community Involvement

If the educational philosophy underlying a programme is the value of observing society in a foreign world, there will inevitably be some involvement with that community during the visit. A distinction should be made between the projects with only general involvement, in the sense of contacts with people of one's own age and with the local people (summer visits to France and Greece, for instance) and projects under which true service to one's own or another community is planned.

Many of the UNESCO Associated Schools projects contain work based on the student's own local community, although the problems may be linked with those facing the international community. Some of the subjects covered by the Environmental Education Schools Network relate explicitly to the improvement or creation of local services. Leicestershire has held work camps abroad to clear up the countryside in France or build a community center in Greece. The schools in Toulon and Mannheim have put on drama performances for the whole community. Mobility International has promoted work camps to serve the community, construction projects, town studies and plans for integration with other young people locally. The United World College experiment is very well known: its students do coast guard work along a 15-mile stretch of coast, frequently taking part in the rescue operations offshore and on the cliffs of Wales.

The School Curriculum

In many of the fifteen cases we studied, the exchange is arranged by an education authority and is automatically included in the

curriculum of the pupils taking part. Alternatively, the experience may be extracurricular, usually taking place during the summer or Easter holiday, although in some cases the school may be involved in the arrangements. Two specific cases are the long-term exchanges arranged by EFIL and the courses in the United World College. In the former case, the absence of pupils from their original school for a whole year gives rise to awkward problems with the authorities regarding their reintegration on their return home. Each country solves the problems in its own way. In the case of the United World College, the bureaucratic problem of continuing studies has been solved by opting for the International Baccalaureate, now recognized by many European universities, which means that young people can go on to higher studies without suffering from having skipped a year of schooling in their own country.

Evaluation of the Experience

Unfortunately, it is not a common practice for organizations promoting youth mobility programmes to evaluate them. Especially in the case of the less solidly structured or locally based organizations, it seems that the organizers expend most of their energy on promoting the exchange and finding the financial and human resources they need to keep it going, and just do not have the time to stand back every now and then and review the work they have done. Furthermore, those assessments that are done are relatively thorough only when an institution makes an ad hoc grant for the purpose of evaluation, or one or more independent research workers can devote time to this end alone. This is the case with the UNESCO Associated Schools, where evaluation research has been carried out by Stacy Churchill and Issa Omari.[3] The exchange between the Mannheim and Toulon schools is backed up by the Franco-German Youth Office, with its good team of research workers; in addition, the European Community has made a grant to Hertfordshire and the Llanelli-Huy exchange for this sole purpose.

EFIL has launched a series of seminars to discuss this and other subjects, based on some of the conclusions arising from research conducted by AFS International/Intercultural Programs on changes in attitudes during and after the experience in a group of students exposed to a prolonged stay abroad.[4] EFIL also has published a booklet setting

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[3] Churchill, Stacy, and Omari, Issa. *Evaluation du Système des Écoles Associées de l'UNESCO*. UNESCO, 1980. ED-80/CONF 622/3.

[4] *Editor's Note: Reference is to the Impact Study being carried out by the AFS Research Department. Information about this study and preliminary results may be obtained without charge from the Department.*

out the results of the first two years of annual intra-European student exchanges.[5]

Now that it has been in existence for twenty years, the United World College intends to seek a financial grant or cooperation from a university in evaluating the achievements of its former students over the period.

We know of no systematic assessments of the other programmes that we investigated; what evaluations there have been are mainly subjective and emotional, having been formulated by the participants themselves on their return but not processed in a structured way. It should be borne in mind, however, that in the field of social science reliable instruments do not as yet exist for such an assessment. The debate on the changes in attitudes and values brought about by cultural exchanges is still open-ended.

Results of the Experience

A direct consequence of the lack of evaluation is that it is very difficult to formulate an overall picture of the outcome of experiences of living in another country, especially in view of the wide variety of programmes offered and the considerable divergencies among the promoting organizations. One recurring comment in the reports by organizers of exchanges is that, whatever the original reason for taking a group of young people abroad, this result is invariably overshadowed by another, more important outcome: the acquisition of greater maturity in general, greater self-confidence, a fellow-feeling for the people of other countries and acceptance of differences.

It is significant that the coordinators of schools taking part in the environmental protection project state that the main results include "greater awareness of what it means to be European." Teachers at Canterbury Technical College also feel that the most positive aspect of the visit to Holland was that it gave greater motivation for study in general. Pupils and teachers at Huy both stress the "creation of inter-institutional and personal ties" much more than practising the language, the reason originally suggested for the exchange. The organizers of summer visits to Ireland for Spanish youngsters also agree on the general human value of the stay abroad, although they do not deny the usefulness of learning the language.

The Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges, discussing the stay of a British group in Greece in the summer of 1978, warns us that these results are not automatically achieved by bringing together young people from different cultures. A group may even withdraw

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[5] *Study on Intra-European Programs*. European Federation for Intercultural Learning (Antwerp, Belgium), 1977.

into itself. The difficulty of making contact with the outside world may induce the young people to seek the security of being with those who speak their own language and have the same customs. The Central Bureau notes, for instance, that correspondence exchanged after the visit to Greece tended to be between young people from the same country rather than between those of different nationalities.

The Keys to Success

Depending on the duration and nature of the visit, the keys to success, as stated by the organizers and sometimes by the participants themselves, are (a) good selection of participants, (b) thorough and intensive preparations before departure, (c) careful matching with the host families (when the young people are placed with families), and (d) general guidance from the host organization to help understanding of the strange culture.

The value of careful selection is highlighted by the United World College which, through the work of its national committees, tries to bring together a group of intellectually alert and capable young people who will justify the College's two-year investment in them. We have already remarked on the orientation, matching, and guidance offered by EFIL.

Institutions arranging for short visits also stress the vital importance of pre-orientation. Stadtische Realschule Heiligenhaus, a UNESCO Associated School, points out the value of painstaking preparatory work and involvement of the whole of the school. Subjects linked with the visit to the other country are taught even to pupils not taking part. Detailed preparations are made for the exchange between the Mannheim and Toulon schools through classroom work, bringing the parents in as well. This preliminary parent involvement is also mentioned by the city of Frankfort and the Leicestershire education authorities.

Teachers in Llanelli and Huy see the matching of pupils and families as the crucial factor in the success of the scheme. The city of Frankfort reports on what it feels is its useful experiment in matching pupils and families with the help of records of their particulars. The importance of carefully prepared guidance and a properly structured programme is also urged by many institutions. The UNESCO School mentioned considers it vital to involve foreign students in the work of the host class, a view that is shared by Llanelli, Huy, Mannheim, and Toulon. Experience with summer visits to Greece and Italy has demonstrated the need for well trained leaders who are with the young visitors throughout the day.

It is stated in various ways that the mere fact of bringing together young people of different nationalities does not necessarily lead to reciprocal understanding or the elimination of prejudice. This

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will happen, especially when the experience is short, only by carefully planned and structured projects under the watchful eye of experts and if the young people are being selected in the light of the aims of the programme and for their readiness to learn from the experience.

Mobility and Research

The programmes described here touch in various ways on educational science, peace studies, cultural anthropology, psychology, intercultural communication, ethnology, etc. Few of the institutions involved, however, have the funds to carry out in-depth research in the fields of social science with a view to improving the content and methodology of youth exchange programmes.

To a limited extent, such research is done by the Franco-German Youth Office, which has promoted some research and assessment of its programmes. EFIL has promoted a series of seminars in three cycles: youth mobility and education (1979-80), cultural literacy and cross-cultural communication (1980-81) and the cultural dimension of development (1981-82-83). In addition there have been seminars of a more practical nature on the organization of youth exchanges within Europe; the proceedings of some of these seminars have been published.[6] We have already mentioned the research on the Associated Schools system promoted by UNESCO. The committee coordinating the Environmental Education School Network publishes annual reports on the evaluation seminars held by teachers and the research conducted by pupils.[7]

Even so, research on youth mobility is a field in which research efforts are few and far between. It is to be hoped that public and private organizations interested in this sector will devote more time and resources to it in future years.

Among the publications produced by the bodies described in this report, we should mention the extensive and valuable literature put out by the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges,[8] the Franco-German Youth Office studies,[9] the UNESCO Associated Schools

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[6] *Youth Mobility and Education*. European Federation for Intercultural Learning (Antwerp, Belgium), 1981.

[7] Available from Anton Trant, Curriculum Development Unit, University of Dublin School of Education, Westland Row 28, Dublin 2, Ireland.

[8] Available from the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges, Seymour Mews House, Seymour Mews, London W1H 9PE, England.

[9] Available from OFAJ/DFJW Press Service, Rhondorferstrasse 23, 5340 Bad Honnef 1, Federal Republic of Germany.

journal *International Understanding at School*,[10] and *The Leicestershire Plan* published in 1980.[11]

CONCLUSION

We are drawing to the close of a twenty-year period of experimentation -- some of it unsystematic but always of great interest -- in the field of youth mobility in Europe. International organizations, governments and local authorities, individual schools and sometimes even individual teachers, international youth organizations and specialist groups have -- each in their own sphere -- made a vital contribution to the overwhelming growth of this form of experience.

Although the results have not yet been submitted to scientific scrutiny, and despite all the uncertainties inherent in educational ventures, to a very great extent what has been achieved has been rewarding for the organizers and has aroused enthusiasm among the young people taking part.

It is to be hoped that over the next few years there will be more widespread exchange of information among the organizations at every level that promote the exchanges as well as more substantial investment by public, national, and international agencies in both experimentation and research so that, in the not too distant future, this experience in the interdependent world of tomorrow will become generally available and part of the educational heritage of each and every one of us.

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[10] Available from the Peace Education Division, UNESCO, 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75007 Paris, France.

[11] Fairbairn, A. N. *The Leicestershire Plan*. Heinemann Educational Books (London, England), 1980.

OCCASIONAL PAPERS IN INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

is a publication of

AFS International/ Intercultural Programs, Inc.
313 East 43rd Street
New York, NY 10017, USA

Editor: Dr. Neal Grove

Associate Editor: Bettina Hansel

Vice President for Programs:
Dr. Urs-Rainer von Arx

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